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Leadership Development funds

*Open Invitation Theatre Presents*

# What Speaks in the Blood: Cycle 2000

A Mythopoetic Musical Drama
about womens' healing as
sacred journey.

Created & Directed by
Sharon Mathis

**March 10 & 11, 17 & 18, 24 & 25**

The First Existentialist Congregation
470 Candler Park Drive, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia

## Created & Directed by Sharon Mathis

Produced by Craig Mathis
Choreographed by
Belinda "Red Earth" Gibbs
Music Directed by Jean Heinrich and Janna Nelson

Anyplace. Nowhere. Anytime. Now. Five women undertake a sacred journey of healing. Moving from their own kind of innocence through betrayal and separation, they confront universal tasks of inner transformation: facing resistance, fear, isolation, emptiness, and owning one's own destructive nature. Experiencing these struggles allows the women to recognize the presence of Spirit within and to begin to love themselves and each other.

Along the way, they are enticed, nurtured, and prodded by Celia, Alice and Christine who embody the Crone, Mother and Virgin aspects of the Goddess expressed through a human self. Morgan, the story-teller, maps the womens' journeys and serves as Mistress of Ceremonies. She is assisted in these tasks by Eve, the Guardian of the Crossroads, and Lilly, the Trickster.

**Sharon Mathis, Director,** is a psychologist in private practice in Atlanta. In her other life, she is a director, playwright, and small-time theatrical empress aria.

# The Program

Act I: The Descent

| | |
|---|---|
| Prologue | But, I'm an atheist |
| Scene I | Dreaming A Double<br>Our heroines enjoy the pleasures of bonding. |
| Scene II | Suffer me not to be separated<br>Our heroines begin to ask questions and pull away. |
| Scene III | The First Gate: The Guardian<br>Grieving the loss of the familiar and resisting the unknown. |
| Scene IV | The Second Gate: Fear<br>Sometimes fear comes in response to what is done to us, and sometimes fear comes in recognition of what is in us. |

There will be a 15 minute intermission between acts.

Act II: The Return

| | |
|---|---|
| Scene I | The Third Gate: Silence<br>You are, indeed, alone. |
| Scene II | The Fourth Gate: Need<br>Confronting the immeasurable emptiness within. |
| Scene III | The Last Gate: Death<br>There is neither good nor bad, just what is necessary.<br>Innocence is impossible. |
| Scene IV | Our Quiet Time<br>What is she in this night becoming? |
| Scene V | Rebirth |
| Scene VI | Celebration<br>She knows what you had to do to love yourself. |
| Scene VII | Reconciliation<br>There is no knife that can sever me from her,<br>when I go down to bleed, to birth, to die. |

# Production and Musicians

| | |
|---|---|
| Director | Sharon Mathis |
| Producer | Craig Mathis |
| Artistic Director | Kelly Brady |
| Right Hand Woman | Rainbow Moon |
| Production Assistant | Shirley Puett |
| Carpenter | Mel Liddell |
| Lighting Consultant | Mark Langlois |
| Lighting Design | Craig Mathis |
| Lighting Crew Chief | Rainbow Moon |
| Computer Consultant | Amelia Hartley |
| Choreographer | Belinda "Red Earth" Gibbs |
| Directors of Music | Jean Heinrich and Janna Nelson |
| Musicians: | Alexa Adamo (Flute); |
| | Steve Sabom |
| | (Bass Guitar and Harmonica); |
| | Jean Heinrich (Keyboard) |

Drums and Percussion

Laurie Bassett ; Blue Fire/Nan MacMahon;

Delan Curran ; Rainbow Moon ; Sarah Thorsen

Music and Lyrics for "Frijoles" Written by Jean Heinrich. Music for Mas Que ("One life is not more real") composed by Jean Heinrich. Theme for "I am the rose pressed in a book." adapted from Dennis Hyatt: Volume III, Glacier Bay. All other music composed by the musicians in collaboration with the actors.

# The Cast

| | |
|---|---|
| Goddesses | |
| Christine (The Virgin) | Singing Deer/Sherri |
| Alice (The Mother) | Mia Jamison |
| Celia (The Crone) | Kyle Glenn |
| Morgan, the Storyteller | Janna Nelson |
| Eve, the Guardian of the Crossroads | Belinda "Red Earth" Gibbs |
| Eve's Daughter | Megan Gibbs |
| Lilly, the Trickster | Jean Heinrich |
| Judith, Wife/Mother | Suzanne Fleming |
| Mischa and Helene, the Lovers | Tascha Pasquelletti<br>Ayn Barkshadt |
| Sarah, the Mother | Dreaming Bear/Thelen |
| Caroline, and Daughter | Lightning Rattle/Darlene |
| Dancers | Stacey Shulman<br>Sarah Thorsen |
| Understudy | Shirley "Drumming Wolf" Puett |

Angels: It's very clear to me that the power of this play comes from the wisdom and beauty of the incredible writing by the many authors included in the script combined with the talent, passion, dedication, and love of the women and men who make it happen here. Some of the contributions of these folks can be seen and heard on stage and in the band. Others' work is visible in the set, costumes, lighting, and art around you. There were also folks whose contributions are invisible but essential: Edith Kelman, supremely capable and supportive major domo of First E; Lanier Clance, cheerleader and inspiration; Julia Bridge; Amelia Hartley; Linda Bryant and The Women of Charis; Dr. Maryann Adams of Zami; and Carol Dietrick, as always. Special thanks to David Mendoza for his creative ideas and laughs; to Harry Case for his musical ideas and to "Nuyorican Soul" for the musical link.

# Bios

**Alexa Adamo (Flautist)** is a feminist researcher of male violence against women at GSU. She is completing her Master's thesis on gender equity and school reform (Women's Studies) at GSU and moonlights as a flautist. She is thrilled to be back with *What Speaks in the Blood* for the reunion tour!

**Ayn M. Barkshadt (Helene)** is a 33 year old bookkeeper in the real world. Healer, Light worker, lover of animals and sign language. "As I learn to move more into my creative side I am allowing myself to fulfill a secret desire to be on stage."

**Laurie Bassett (Drums & Percussion)** is a teacher, musician, lover of life and explorer of inner spaces.

**Blue Fire/Nan MacMahon (Drums & Percussion)** Goddess sculpting and drumming awake the dream...shifting, shaping energy...creating my life. Great Spirit, I am grateful. Her sculptures are exhibited in the sanctuary during the run of the show.

**Kelly Brady (Artistic Director)** is a book lover, artist, feminist, Buddhist and Leo. "Sharon writes plays with words. I write them with wood, fabric and paint. Between the two of us, plus the actors and musicians, and technical support, a whole story appears. That's magic." She's moving to Asheville when this run of "What Speaks" is over and will miss all of you very much.

**Delan Curran (Drums/Percussion)** Nurse, Mother, Lover, Drummer, Devotee of nature and the Goddess. I am honored to be a part of this production for the second time — together we evolve and grow.

**Dreaming Bear/Thelen (Sarah)** Since my drama-major college production years I have been a frustrated actress for over 3 decades — until now. It has been important to leave my mountain hollow home and follow my path to this city to work on letting go. Years of unrealized dreams are culminating here.

**Suzanne Marie Fleming (Judith)** Her first show appearance was as the rear end of a horse in *Alice in Wonderland.* Other favorite roles have been as Titania in A *Midsummer Nights Dream,* as Bella in *Lost in Yonkers,* and as Dr. Stephanie Mason in *Cancer Moon.*

**Belinda "Red Earth" Gibbs (Choreographer/Eve)** is a psychotherapist, Mother to Megan and a dancer/mime from a previous life. At the age of 50, she finds herself on a path of spiritual healing that holds a prayer for balance and heart in her life!

**Megan Gibbs (Actress/Dancer)** is 13 years old and in 7th grade at Inman Middle School. She is a dancer and musician who is adding acting to a growing list of talents. Bunnies, cats, and a large Rotweiller share a house with the rest of her extensive family who keep her life interesting!

**Kyle Glenn (Celia)** My name is Kyle...Check...I'm from Seattle...Check...I moved to Atlanta... Check...Cause I hate rain...Check Me Out!

## More Bios

**Jean Heinrich** (Music Director/Composer/Lily) is a clinical psychologist practicing in Atlanta. She keeps her spirit renewed by playing and performing music and clowning. She is currently writing a libretto and score on the psychological trauma induced by litigation, a survival manual, that is serious & funny to be produced in Atlanta.

**Mia Jamison** (Alice) Mother. Lover. Tree hugging house painter. New to the stage. Happy to be a part of this!!

**Lightning Rattle/Darlene Weathers** (Caroline) is a writer. Grateful to Red Earth, Night Bear, and Sharon Mathis for being Healers and Believing; to Mom (Peggy) and Dad (Watson) and her extensive families (here and there). Special thanks to Mom for sewing lessons and a creative Spirit— for helping make Red Earth's costume. All of life is Sacred.

**Janna Nelson** (Musical Director & Morgan) This is Janna's first time on the stage as an actor. She has sung and played music in the Atlanta area for the last 22 years. Her other career as an elementary school teacher has served as her drama instructor.

**Tascha L. Pasqualetti** (Mischa) has done previous theater works as *Hetside Story, Homo on the Range*, etc. Now she has finally decided to branch out!!! Can't wait!!

**Rainbow Moon** (Drums/Percussion) Homeward bound Granddaughter, gourd-head, pointillist, Night Owl; seeker of beauty, balance, healing and power. She is thrilled to be working again with her beloved Mauve Velvet.

**Shirley "Drumming Wolf" Puett** (Production Assistant) She returns hungrily to the theatre after almost 20 years. A therapist by trade, she attributes the reawakening of her creative fire to studies with a Native American Medicine Woman and to the wonderful group of women who have prodded her to be a part of this moving production.

**Singing Deer/aka Sherri Robinson** (Christine) I am thankful to be involved in this amazing play once again. I completely changed my life through the opening and moving energy three years ago, and I am grateful that the magic and power continues to flow. Aho! Mitakuye oyasin.

**Steve Sabom** (Bass Guitar/Harmonica) is part of the music department at Greater Fair Hill Baptist Church in southwest Atlanta. He performs regularly for Open Invitation Theatre.

**Stacey Beth Shulman** (Dancer) was born and raised in the Atlanta area. She enjoys pursuing creative expression in a variety of mediums.

**Sarah Thorsen** (Drums/Percussion/Dancer) has danced with Hietzo and Company on a scaffold, on a waterfall, and with sticks in a park. She has danced in a maze with Lori Guarisco and Group Delirium. She plays congas with Manos Fuertes directed by Jose de la